

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 DRC-01 /113 W

----- 012383

P R 051215Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3053

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L KAMPALA 2751

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UG US

SUBJECT: AMIN TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT

REFS: (A) STATE 175074; (B) KAMPALA 2741

SUMMARY. UPON BEING ADVISED BY NTIMBA THAT BYAGAGAIRE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SEE ME UNTIL NEXT WEEK BECAUSE HE WAS TOO BUSY (WHICH IS NOT CREDIBLE, SINCE I HAD TOLD BYAGAGAIRE I NEEDED BUT FIVE MINUTES OF HIS TIME), I GAVE MESSAGE IN PARA TWO REF (A) TO NTIMBA AND ASKED HIM TO BRIEF BYAGAGAIRE, WHICH HE PROMISED TO DO. ALTHOUGH NTIMBA AND OTHERS PRESENT SAID LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE IN RESPONSE, I GAINED IMPRESSION THEY WERE RELIEVED THE NEWS WAS NOT WORSE. THEY ALSO LOOKED SOMEWHAT PAINED WHEN I MENTIONED AMIN'S LATEST TELEGRAM. END SUMMARY.

1. I MADE APPOINTMENT MENTIONED PARA ONE REF (B) WITH BYAGAGAIRE IN PHONE CALL TO HIM PERSONALLY. HE ASKED WHETHER I WISHED SEE HIM IN HIS CAPACITY AS MINISTER PUBLIC SERVICE, MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, OR ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER. WHEN I SAID LATTER HE AGREED WE MEET IN FOREIGN MINISTER'S OFFICE AT 1000 TODAY. NTIMBA (ACTING FOM MIN PERM SEC) LATER PHONED ME TO ASK WHAT I WISHED TO DISCUSS WITH ACTING MINISTER, AS HE
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WOULD HAVE TO BRIEF HIM IN ADVANCE. I SAID I HAD A BRIEF MESSAGE

TO DELIVER ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON. NTIMBA ASKED IF IT WAS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL OR WHAT. I SAID POLITICAL.

2. I WAITED IN OSEKU'S (CHIEF OF PROTOCOL) OFFICE FOR HALF HOUR WHILE OSEKU AND NTIMBA CONSULTED WITH BYAGAGAIRE UPSTAIRS (AS I LEARNED FROM SEVERAL OVERHEARD PHONE CONVERSATIONS). FINALLY I WAS TAKEN TO MINISTER'S WAITING ROOM, AND WAS JOINED IN SUCCESSION BY AN UNIDENTIFIED NOTE-TAKER, OSEKU AND THEN NTIMBA. LATTER STATED BYAGAGAIRE WAS VERY BUSY, TOO BUSY TO SEE ME TODAY, BUT PERHPAS NEXT WEEK. I SAID NEXT WEEK WOULD BE TOO LATE FOR MESSAGE I HAD TO DELIVER, WHEREUPON I TOLD HIM I HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO INFORM ACTING MINISTER OFFICIALLY THAT I WAS BEING RECALLED TO WASHINGTON FOR DISCUSSIONS RE FUTURE OF US RELATIONS WITH UGANDA IN VIEW OF INSULTING TONE AND CONTENT OF GENERAL'S LATEST TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT NIXON ABOUT NOBEL PEACE PRIZE. I ASKED NTIMBA TO PASS THIS ON TO BYAGAGAIRE, AS WELL AS TO ETIANG, WHO IS DUE BACK IN KAMPALA THIS WEEKEND. NTIMBA PROMISED HE WOULD DO SO.

3. MY INTERPRETATION OF THIS CHARADE IS THAT BYAGAGAIRE, NTIMBA AND OSEKU CONCLUDED FROM THEIR JOINT CONSULTATIONS THAT MESSAGE I WAS BRINGING WAS BAD NEWS (WHICH WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING SINCE IT IS THE ONLY KIND OF NEWS I HAVE DELIVERED TO MINISTRY IN PAST YEAR). IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES MINISTRY'S NORMAL REACTION IS TO TRY TO KEEP THE EXCHANGE AT AS LOW A LEVEL AS POSSIBLE (I HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS A NUMBER OF TIMES) PRIMARILY BECAUSE NO ONE IN GOU WISHES TO BE THE RECEIPIENT OF BAD NEWS THAT HE MAY THEN HAVE TO PASS ON TO GENERAL AMIN, WHO IS KNOWN TO TREAT BEARERS OF ILL TIDINGS BADLY; THUS BYAGAGAIRE'S CANCELLATION OF OUR MEETING. NTIMBA AND OSEKU GAVE THE APPEARANCE OF BEING RELIEVED THE NEWS WAS NOT WORSE THAN IT WAS, AND THEY LOOKED PAINED WHEN I MENTIONED AMIN'S LATEST TELEGRAM, BUT THEY OFFERED NO APOLOGY OR EXPLANATION FOR IT.

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